

Report of the Wellbeing Centre Development Group November 2019

A meeting was held on 08/10/19 with Chris Hilton and Helen Clifton from Wiltshire Council. This was also attended by Lance Allen, Steve Oldrieve, Stewart Palmen and David Cavill.

Chris Hilton explained

- He had picked up the project on the East Wing site on his arrival and was tasked with moving it forward.
- Outline planning permission had not been obtained because of objections by the Environment Agency despite a great deal of work that had been done on the site. He felt there needed to be a reappraisal of the site.
- Although a final decision had not yet been made it now seemed likely that the CCG would not choose to put their new facility there but either adjacent to the hospital or on a site on the outskirts of the town.
- Leisure were in process of carrying out a review of the needs of Wiltshire and the most effective strategy for meeting them. There was a possibility that there would also choose a site elsewhere on the outskirts of the town though this seems less likely.
- In the light of these developments, there needed to be a reappraisal of the site and the mix of uses that could be located there to make the leisure project financially viable. He wished to do this so that a project could be put forward for Cabinet for a decision either to proceed or not. This was unlikely to happen until March 2020.

Those present expressed real concern that Health were now likely to go elsewhere when originally East Wing had been the preferred site option. Perhaps this was linked to the failure to gain outline planning permission. This is a serious blow. At a time when both Wiltshire Council and Trowbridge Town Council had declared a climate emergency it seemed surprising that health were considering sites that were not accessible by public transport.

It was also a surprise to learn that Leisure were considering other alternatives. It was felt that it would be a tragedy if the original vision of a modern health and leisure facility in the centre of the town was to be lost.

Chris will be attending the Area board meeting on Thursday 7th November. The development of the East Wing site will be a major item on the agenda.

Colin Kay
November 2019